

Pond Management Guide

North Carolina ponds are frequently fished by Tarheel anglers and represent a significant portion of the state's water resource. Properly managed ponds can provide excellent fishing opportunities to a large number of anglers at a reasonable cost. However, it takes careful planning and wise management to maintain high-quality fishing in a pond year after year.

To produce a good crop of fish every year, it is necessary to select the site carefully, construct the pond properly, maintain good water quality, and stock and harvest the pond correctly. Often the difference between a productive pond and an unproductive one is the ability of the owner to obtain sound pond management advice and carry out the recommended practices.

Before constructing a pond, determine your objectives and priorities for the pond. The best management strategy depends upon your objectives. Do you want the pond to produce trophy bass or large quantities of average-sized bass? Do you want big bream (bluegills) or channel catfish? Will the pond be used primarily for irrigation, livestock watering, waterfowl, or recreation? How heavily will the pond be fished? How much money can you devote to achieving your chosen objectives? You must answer these important questions during the initial planning stages so you can develop a proper management plan for the pond.

This publication presents the basic principles of managing recreational ponds and the requirements for producing and maintaining high-quality fishing in a pond. Some common mistakes in pond management and ways of solving pond problems are discussed. This information should allow you to develop and carry out a pond management plan that provides maximum benefits.